

CLAIMS AMENDMENTS

1. (currently amended) Method for the testing of cubic-shaped cigarette packs (10) of formable packaging material by, in particular of cuboid-shaped packs (10) having at least one wrapper of cardboard, characterized in that the pack (10) is impinged impinging the pack (10) with a defined pressure created by lowering a pressure-exerting means (26) onto the pack (10) in a uniform motion and measuring the resulting deformations of the pack (10) are measured, comprising the steps of:
 - a) during the deformation of the pack (10) by the pressure-exerting means (26), measuring (i) the distance covered by the pressure-exerting means (26) and (ii) using a measuring device (28) to determine the counterforce of the pack (10) exerted against the pressure-exerting means (26);
 - b) determining a force versus distance diagram from the measured values of the distance and counterforce measured in step a) and
 - c) comparing the force versus distance diagram with at least one additional force versus distance diagram for the same or a different pack (10).
2. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the distance is measured by a position sensor (31) and the measuring device is a load cell (28) ~~deformations of the packs (10) are compared to default measurements of the same packs or the same kind of packs~~
3. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ further comprising the step of generating and displaying a graphic representation of force versus distance diagram, which shows the resistance force of the pack (10) as counterforce, and which varies as the result of the increasing deformation of the pack (10) under uniform movement of a ~~the~~ pressure-exerting means (26), is measured.
4. (currently amended) Method according to claim 3, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the graphic representation of the course of force acting on the pack (10) during its deformation is plotted as a curve, namely as the course of force applied to

the pack (10) by the pressure-exerting means (26) over the distance traveled by the
pressure-exerting means (26) acting on the pack (10).

5. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 42, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the course of force acting on the pack (10) during uniform movement of the pressure-exerting means (26) is represented as a second derivative of the force versus distance diagram.

6. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the pack (10) is a cuboid-shaped pack (10) comprising a large surface front side (13) and corresponding rear side and the force is transferred to the pack surface (10) across the entire pack surface on the entire large front side (13) or rear side.

7. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the pressure-exerting means (26) is applied to the pack (10) ~~with~~at a uniform constant rate of movement and ~~that the force acting in the region of the pack (10) is measured by the measuring device is~~ a pressure gauge.

8. (cancel).

9. (currently amended) Method according to Claim 82, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the measuring results of the load cell (28) and ~~those of the position sensor (31) are evaluated by a computer and plotted as a~~ second derivative curve, ~~preferably in the form of its second derivative.~~

10. (currently amended) Apparatus for the testing of cigarette packs (10) of formable packaging material, ~~in particular of cuboid shaped packs (10) having at least one wrapper of cardboard, characterized in that~~which the pack (10) is positioned between opposing pressure-exerting means, in particular between a pressure plate (26) and a bearing plate (27), it being possible to move and in which at least one pressure-exerting means, preferably the pressure plate (26), is movable against the pack (10), comprising:

- a) a position sensor (31) arranged on the pressure-exerting means that is movable against the pack (10); and
- b) a load cell (28) arranged on the other pressure-exerting means.

11. (currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the opposing pressure exerting means comprises an upper pressure plate (26) and a lower bearing plate (27), and the pressure plate (26) is mounted on a carrier which~~that~~can be moved up and down, in particular on a pressure strut (24), which can be displaced by means of a uniformly driven gear mechanism.

12. (cancel).

13. (currently amended) Apparatus according to Claim ~~10~~11, ~~characterized by~~further comprising a supporting framework with an upper traverse (22) and a lower traverse (23), which are connected to one another ~~on the by~~ supporting columns (20, 21), with the pressure strut (24) being displaceably mounted on the supporting columns (20, 21) and the load cell (28) positioned on the lower traverse (23).

14. (currently amended) Apparatus according to Claim ~~10~~11, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the position sensor (31) is attached to the displaceable pressure strut (24)~~pressure exerting means is a distance measuring device.~~

15. (currently amended) Apparatus according to Claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~further comprising a test station (39) with an apparatus for the compressed deformation of a pack (10) to which the apparatus, the test station is being assigned to a packaging unit (42) for random testing of the packs (10).

16. (currently amended) Apparatus according to Claim 15, characterized ~~in that~~ wherein the test station (39) is positioned in the region of a pack conveyor (38) between a packer (36) and a cello-packer (37).

17. (currently amended) Apparatus according to Claim 15, characterized ~~in that~~ wherein a plurality of packaging units (42) having at least one test station (39) each are connected to a central computer (43) for the central logging of operational data concerning the testing results.

18. - 29. (cancel).

30. (new) Method according to Claim 3, wherein the course of force acting on the pack (10) during uniform movement of the pressure-exerting means (26) is represented as a second derivative of the force versus distance diagram.

31. (new) Method according to Claim 2, wherein the pack (10) is a cuboid-shaped pack (10) comprising a large surface front side (13) and corresponding rear side and the force is transferred to the pack (10) across the entire pack surface on the entire large front side (13) or rear side.

32. (new) Method according to Claim 3, wherein the pack (10) is a cuboid-shaped pack (10) comprising a large surface front side (13) and corresponding rear side and the force is transferred to the pack (10) across the entire pack surface on the entire large front side (13) or rear side.

33. (new) Method according to Claim 5, wherein the pack (10) is a cuboid-shaped pack (10) comprising a large surface front side (13) and corresponding rear side and the force is transferred to the pack (10) across the entire pack surface on the entire large front side (13) or rear side.

34. (new) Method according to Claim 2, wherein the pressure-exerting means (26) is applied to the pack (10) at a constant rate of movement and the measuring device is a pressure gauge.

35. (new) Method according to Claim 3, wherein the pressure-exerting means (26) is applied to the pack (10) at a constant rate of movement and the measuring device is a pressure gauge.

36. (new) Method according to Claim 5, wherein the pressure-exerting means (26) is applied to the pack (10) at a constant rate of movement and the measuring device is a pressure gauge.

37. (new) Method according to Claim 6, wherein the pressure-exerting means (26) is applied to the pack (10) at a constant rate of movement and the measuring device is a pressure gauge.

38. (new) Apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the position sensor (31) is attached to the displaceable pressure strut (24).

39. (new) Apparatus according to Claim 11, further comprising a test station (39) to which the apparatus, the test station being assigned to a packaging unit (42) for random testing of the packs (10).

40. (new) Apparatus according to Claim 13, further comprising a test station (39) to which the apparatus, the test station being assigned to a packaging unit (42) for random testing of the packs (10).

41. (new) Apparatus according to Claim 14, further comprising a test station (39) to which the apparatus, the test station being assigned to a packaging unit (42) for random testing of the packs (10).

42. (new) Apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein a plurality of packaging units (42) having at least one test station (39) each are connected to a central computer (43) for the central logging of operational data concerning the testing results.